

## Annual Governors Statement for the Board of Governors of Toftwood Infant and Junior School Federation 2021/2022

It has been another productive year for Toftwood Infant and Junior School Federation. This year was the first full year in school for some of our pupils, without lockdowns or COVID closures. This meant the first full year for all of our Year 2 children since they joined us.

Whilst we transitioned back into being able to work more closely again as a whole community, staff were looking at and addressing any gaps as a result of remote learning and absences. Children had a mixture of quality first teaching, small group intervention and small group and individual support from teaching staff.

The children transitioned well back into full time education and we were very aware of areas we had to focus on. As a result the children all made progress from their relative starting points.

Although we do not have to publish SATs results this year, we were pleased to see the Year 6 children's efforts translating to their Year 6 results, particularly in maths, reading and SPAG. Writing is a continued focus for us next year, to ensure we give all children opportunities to meet the required standards in each area, as some of them narrowly missed out on being graded as Greater Depth or expected.

The Federation is a thriving community that includes children and their families, staff and many service providers. Thank you, to all those people who are actively engaged with the school community and want to support our children.

We continue with our aim to provide single aged year groups in our schools as we feel this allows us to ensure a progression of skills, knowledge and understanding over time, and build a progressive teaching sequence for each child in each subject.

However, as with all schools, we have significant budget pressures with increased costs for staffing, utilities and non funded wage increases, which all impact on what we can provide.

In accordance with the Government's requirement for all Governing Boards the three core strategic functions of the Board of Governors are:

1. Ensuring clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction;
2. Holding the Executive Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils; and
3. Overseeing the financial performance of the school and making sure its money is well spent.

To be sure that the Governing Board are well equipped to perform their role we have undertaken many training and development sessions with our school improvement partners. We take our role very seriously and strive to continuously improve.

In the year 2021-2022 the Governing Board consisted of 1 Head Teacher, 1 Local Authority, 2

Foundation, 6 Co-opted, 1 Elected Staff, 2 Elected Parents positions. Like many schools, however, it has been a challenge to have a full Governing Board and we have had vacancies which we have not been able to fill.

In the academic year 22-23 we are actively looking to fill them.

Attendance record of Governors:

Most Governors have reasonable attendance at meetings, and we have never cancelled a meeting because it was not “quorate” (the number of Governors needed to ensure that legal decisions can be made).

The work that the Board of Governors and the committees have done:

The full board of Governors met 5 times this year. The Governors also sit on at least one committee. The committees were:

Curriculum, Achievement and Assessment, Finance and Premises, Human Resources and Safeguarding.

There are also other committees that meet as needed.

Terms of reference for each committee will be reviewed in the Autumn term.

As part of our monitoring role the Governors have been involved in the recruitment of new staff in the 2021-2022 academic year. The Governors discussed and questioned the School Development & Improvement Plan which continued to be regularly reviewed and monitored. The Governors have scrutinised and closely monitored the school budget to ensure actual income and expenditure is in line with the forecast and we are getting value for money. They have also compared the schools’ finances to that of schools of similar size to ensure income and expenditure is appropriate.

The Governors have been actively involved in the life of the school, not only through their three strategic core functions, but in ensuring they visit the school during the school day as part of their role. This has been limited this year as we exit COVID restrictions, but we hope to have more regular visits this year.

We welcome feedback and we’re looking for ways to improve the way we do this in the coming year.

The Governors have also been especially interested in the progress and attainment of the pupils.

They have monitored the progress being made by pupils throughout the year and considered the gender gaps as well as the gap between Pupil Premium children and non-Pupil Premium Children based on evidence shared by the Senior Leadership Team. The Governors have also evaluated the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and the needs of Looked After Children.

They ensure they are up to date with statutory practices as well as whole school processes through

training, discussion and external support as required. The Governors also looked closely at attendance rates of children and groups of children. In terms of safeguarding, the Governors monitor that the school's safeguarding and child protection policy is being implemented effectively and receive regular updates on this. They review annually the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. The safeguarding of children is a high priority for the Governing Board. Members of the Governing Board have also been trained in safer recruitment procedures and one trained person is always part of each interview panel. Governors are keen to see the impact of new systems that has been purchased for the coming year to support the school in carrying out their child protection role. Looking ahead, the Board of Governors will be continuing to consider the future of the Federation and looking at all options for the future, including discussions around academy status. They will look at all of the legislation, guidance and advice and ensure any decisions are made in the best interests of the children in the school. They will continue to move the school forward and make improvements for the benefit of the education and care of its pupils. The Governors are wholly committed to ensuring the best education and care for all of the children in the schools at all times. We want to thank everyone for being a valuable part of our federation community.

Hannah Rudling

Chair of Governors